

REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION

**HENDERSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

MEETING DATE: December 3, 2007

SUBJECT: Public Defender Office Space

ATTACHMENTS: Public Defender Space Presentation

SUMMARY OF REQUEST:

The North Carolina Office of Indigent Defense Services notified the Counties of NC Judicial District 29B (Henderson, Polk, and Transylvania) that a Public Defender has been appointed and office space will be required. Henderson County is required to provide office space and furniture for the Public Defender and staff. The attached presentation provides information on the requirements, options and a recommendation for locating the new Public Defender.

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED: Provide staff direction on locating the Public Defender.

Suggested Motion:

I move that staff develop office space for the new Public Defender in the area currently used as the law library and in the available space at 331 1st Ave East. Then when available, relocate the Public Defender's office to the Chamber of Commerce building.

Public Defender Space

- The North Carolina Office of Indigent Defense Services notified the Counties of NC Judicial District 29B (Henderson, Polk, and Transylvania) that a Public Defender has been appointed and office space will be required.
- Paul Welch, District 29B Public Defender

Engineering and Facility Services



Public Defender Space

- Space Requirements
- Review of Options
- Recommendation

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Public Defender Space Requirements

- Initial Space Needed February 1, 2008
- Initial Requirements
 - 1 Public Defender Office
 - 3 Full Time Positions (2 APD, 1 Admin)
 - “Equivalent to District Attorney”
 - “Walking Distance to Courthouse”
- Additional Intermediate Future Needs
 - (5 more positions)

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Public Defender Space Options

- 331 First Ave East (House next to Jail)
- Law Library
- Lease Office Space
- Lease Mobile Office Space
- Chamber of Commerce
- Water Utility Building (Fourth Ave)
- Old Health Building (US 176)
- Construct Addition to Courthouse

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Public Defender Space Options

331 First Ave East (House next to Jail)

- Adjacent to Courthouse
- Small, less than 1000 SF
- Currently Occupied with only 1 to 2 offices available
- Will not accommodate more than Initial Need

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Public Defender Space Options

Law Library

- Library can be down-sized and moved downstairs
- Space available for 3 to 4 offices
- Next to Victim-Witness room (conflict w/ PD)
- Inexpensive “In-House” Renovations needed
- Not a permanent solution

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Public Defender Space Options

Lease Office Space

- Space available within walking distance to CH
- Approximately \$30,000 per year
- No renovations or maintenance needed
- Possible long term solution

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Public Defender Space Options

Lease Mobile Office Space

- Designed for PD, Locate on 4th Ave
- Expensive Lease Option
- Zoning Concerns
- Possible Law Enforcement Center Location

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Public Defender Space Options

Chamber of Commerce

- Currently occupied by Chamber
 - relocation possible
- Near Courthouse
- Permanent solution w/ possible space for DA
- Inexpensive “In-House” Renovations needed

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Public Defender Space Options

Water Utility Building (Fourth Ave)

- Near Courthouse
- Very Expensive to Renovate (over \$350,000)
- Possible Law Enforcement Center Location
- Building needs to be Demolished

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Public Defender Space Options

Old Health Building (US 176)

- Not Highest and Best Use of Property
- Not Located Close to Courthouse
- Still Appropriate Decision to Surplus
 - Factors Leading to Decision Remain Applicable

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Public Defender Space Options

Construct Addition to Courthouse

- Best Permanent Solution
- Two Year Process at Best
- Expensive

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Public Defender Space Recommendation

- Permanent Location at Chamber of Commerce Building
 - Public Defender
 - Possible DA expansion
- Bridge the Time till Available
 - Law Library
 - 331 First Ave East Offices

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Public Defender Space

Questions?

Thank You

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